

REMARKS

Claims 18-21 are pending. The previously withdrawn Claims 1-17 have been cancelled.

The examiner rejected Claim 18 under 35 USC 112, since the number of columns and jackpots was not upwardly limited. In Claim 18, each jackpot is associated with a particular column. The specification on page 3, lines 22-26, and original Claim 18, convey that there may be any number of columns, as practical for a gaming machine. It was agreed in the telephone conversation with the examiner on March 18 that the specification envisioned any practical number of columns (not limited to 5) and that the amendment to Claim 18 (deleting the “N” before “jackpots”) would overcome the rejection.

The examiner rejected Claims 18-21 as being anticipated by Baerlocher (US 7,029,395).

Claim 18 recites a plurality of jackpots, each jackpot associated with a different column. A jackpot associated with a particular column is incremented when a jackpot-incrementing symbol is displayed in that column. In the telephone conversation with the examiner on March 18, it was agreed that Claim 18 is allowable over Baerlocher since, in Baerlocher, there is only a single jackpot for a single game, so there could not be a different jackpot associated with each column.

Accordingly, Claims 18-20 are respectfully submitted to be allowable.

Claim 21 has been amended herein to clarify that “multiple ones of the N jackpots may be won in a single game.” In Baerlocher, only a single jackpot may be won in a single game. Claim 21 also includes the step of “incrementing the plurality of jackpots based on, at least in part, the occurrence of certain icons displayed in the primary game.” Baerlocher does not increment any jackpots “based on, at least in part, the occurrence of certain icons displayed in the primary game.” In the telephone conversation with the examiner on March 18, it was agreed that Claim 21, as amended, is allowable over Baerlocher.

No Need For Terminal Disclaimer

In the first office action on this application, dated June 27, 2007, the examiner provisionally rejected Claim 21 as being obvious over Claim 3 in the then copending U.S. Application 10/658,566 (now US 7,291,066), assigned to the present assignee and having a common inventor. It is respectfully submitted that present Claim 21 is not obvious over the patented dependent Claim 3, reproduced below, from patent 7,291,066, since Claim 3 is unrelated to incrementing or awarding multiple jackpots.

1. A method performed in a gambling game comprising:

displaying an array of symbols in a base game at symbol positions having at least one row and a plurality of columns;

detecting a trigger event that enables a bonus feature;

converting a plurality of the symbols displayed to a plurality of displayed award values located at the symbol positions such that a player sees all the award values; randomly selecting, by a computer, at least one of the values from the displayed award values but not all of the displayed award values; and

awarding a player a bonus award based on the randomly selected at least one of the values, wherein detecting a trigger event comprises detecting one or more special symbols displayed in the base game, wherein randomly selecting at least one of the values comprises changing values in a column in which a special symbol is located, and wherein awarding a player a bonus award comprises awarding a player a bonus award based on a value appearing in the position of the special symbol after the values have stopped changing.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein detecting a trigger event comprises detecting one or more certain symbols displayed in the base game.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all Claims 18-21 are allowable and a terminal disclaimer is not needed.

Should the Examiner have any questions, please call the undersigned at (408) 382-0480 x202.

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Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,

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